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Dick Sargent

Richard Stanford Cox (April 19, 1930 – July 8, 1994), known professionally as **Dick Sargent**, was an American actor, notable as the second actor to portray Darrin Stephens on ABC's fantasy situation comedy *Bewitched*. He took the name *Dick Sargent* from a *Saturday Evening Post* illustrator/artist of the same name.

Dick Sargent

Born	Richard Stanford Cox April 19, 1930 Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, U.S.
Died	July 8, 1994 (aged 64) Los Angeles, California
Other names	Richard Sargent
Occupation	Actor
Years active	1954–1993
Partner	Albert Williams (1986–1994)

Early life and career

Sargent was born Richard Stanford Cox in Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, on April 19, 1930, to Ruth McNaughton and Colonel Elmer Cox. Ruth McNaughton was daughter of John McNaughton (who founded Los Angeles's famed Union Stockyards). She appeared under the stage name of Ruth Powell, and had supporting bit roles in such films as *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* and *Hearts and Trumps* with Nazimova. Sargent's father Colonel Elmer Cox served in World War I and later became a business manager to Hollywood figures, including Douglas Fairbanks and Erich von Stroheim. Sargent attended the San Rafael Military Academy in San Rafael, California, before majoring in drama at Stanford University. He appeared in two dozen plays with the Stanford Players Theater.[1]

Sargent appeared in feature films following his debut in *Prisoner of War* (1954). He appeared in *The Great Locomotive Chase* (1956) starring Fess Parker. In the 1957 movie *Bernardine*, the little-known Sargent had his most important role to date, as lovesick teenager Sanford "Fofo" Wilson. The character was the main focus of the story, but Sargent's work was overshadowed by the presence of several famous names in the cast, including Hollywood legend Janet Gaynor, sitcom star Ronnie Burns, and Pat Boone, who had just become a singing sensation and was making his film debut.

Sargent appeared in the 1959 feature film *Operation Petticoat* starring Cary Grant, and *The Ghost and Mr. Chicken* starring Don Knotts in 1966. He was a regular in three short-lived television comedies, *One Happy Family* in 1961, *Broadside* in 1964,[2][3] and *The Tammy Grimes Show*, a four-episode ABC flop in 1966. For three seasons, from 1969 to 1972, he played Darrin Stephens in *Bewitched*, replacing ailing actor Dick York, a role he had previously turned down.

In 1975, Sargent appeared on the television show *TattleTales* with Fannie Flagg as his "beard", and was introduced as "her guy".[4]

His later movies included the crime drama *Hardcore* (1979) as Jake Van Dorn's strait-laced brother-in-law, Wes DeJong, and as Dr. Jameson in the sci-fi horror film *Parts: The Clonus Horror* (1979). He also played Sheriff Grady Byrd in two 1979–1980 season episodes of *The Dukes of Hazzard*.

Sargent continued to work in film. He played Harry in *Live a Little, Love a Little* (1968) opposite Elvis Presley and Michele Carey, and made guest appearances on television series, including *Navy Log*, *The West Point Story*, *Medic*, *Code 3*, *Ripcord*, *Gunsmoke*, *Wagon Train*, *The Alaskans*, *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet*, *The Rat Patrol*, *I Dream of Jeannie*, *Hazel*, *Dr. Kildare*, *Daniel Boone*, *Kraft Mystery Theater*, *Three's Company*, *The Waltons*, *Charlie's Angels*, *Knots Landing*, *Family Ties*, *The Love Boat*, *Fantasy Island*, *Adam-12*, *The Streets of San Francisco*, *Owen Marshall: Counselor at Law*, *Ellery Queen*, *The Tony Randall Show*, *The Devlin Connection*, *Baretta*, *Switch*, *The Six Million Dollar Man*, *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, *Trapper John, M.D.*, *Matt Houston*, *Alice*, *Taxi*, *Benson*, *Vega$*, *Diff'rent Strokes*, *Here's Lucy*, *Love, American Style*, *The Yellow Rose*, *The Commish*, *Finder of Lost Loves*, *Murder, She Wrote*, *L.A. Law* and *Harry and the Hendersons*. In 1990, he also portrayed himself in an episode of *Columbo*.[5] In the mid-1980s he landed the steady role of Richard Preston, the widowed father, in the TBS sitcom *Down to Earth*. He also appeared in the fantasy comedy *Teen Witch* (1989).

Throughout the 1980s, he joined actress Sally Struthers as an advocate for Christian Children's Fund, which brought relief to children in developing nations. Sargent also did charitable work for the Special Olympics, World Hunger, AIDS Project Los Angeles and the American Foundation for AIDS Research.[1]

Personal life

On National Coming Out Day in 1991, Sargent publicly declared his homosexuality and supported gay rights issues.[6] The high rate of suicide among young gay people was the main reason; he jokingly referred to himself as a "retroactive role model". Sargent recognized that his ill health from prostate cancer may have led people to assume he suffered from AIDS.[7]

Sargent had a companion with whom he lived for over 20 years, before the unidentified man died from a cerebral hemorrhage in 1979. He later lived with his domestic partner, Albert Williams, until his death.[8]

In June 1992, Sargent was a Grand Marshal of the Los Angeles Gay Pride parade along with Elizabeth Montgomery.[6]

Death

Sargent was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 1989. Doctors were initially optimistic that it could be treated. However, the disease continued to spread and, by early 1994, he had become seriously ill.[9] Sargent died from the disease on July 8, 1994, aged 64.[8] His body was cremated.

Former *Bewitched* co-star Elizabeth Montgomery commented, "He was a great friend, and I will miss his love, his sense of humor and his remarkable courage."[7] Montgomery herself died of colon cancer less than a year later.[6]

Partial filmography

- *Prisoner of War* (1954) – Lt. Leonard Lee (uncredited)
- *The Beast with a Million Eyes* (1955) – Deputy Larry Brewster
- *The Great Locomotive Chase* (1956) – Union Soldier (uncredited)
- *Love Me Tender* (1956) – Confederate Soldier (uncredited)

- *Bernardine* (1957) – Sanford Wilson
- *Mardi Gras* (1958) – Dick Saglon
- *Operation Petticoat* (1959) – Ens. Stovall
- *The Great Impostor* (1960) – Hotchkiss
- *That Touch of Mink* (1962) – Young Man (Harry Clark)
- *For Love or Money* (1963) – Harvey Wofford
- *Captain Newman, M.D.* (1963) – Lt. Belden 'Barney' Alderson
- *Fluffy* (1965) – Tommy
- *Billie* (1965) – Matt Bullitt
- *The Ghost and Mr. Chicken* (1966) – George Beckett
- *The Private Navy of Sgt. O'Farrell* (1968) – Capt. Elwood Prohaska
- *Daniel Boone* - Reuben Stone - S2/E18 "The Deserter" (1966)
- *The Young Runaways* (1968) – Freddy 'Sage'
- *Live a Little, Love a Little* (1968)
- *I Dream of Jeannie* (1969) one episode, Jeannie for the Defense - Norman Cashman
- *Adam-12* (1969) Log 92, Tell him he pushed a little too hard – Harry
- *Bewitched* (1969-1972) three seasons - Darrin Stephens
- *Here's Lucy* (1973) one episode, Lucy Plays Cops and Robbers
- *The Streets of San Francisco* (1973) one episode, Season 1, episode 25, Shattered Image
- *The Love Boat* (1977) one episode, Lonely at the Top/Silent Night/Divorce Me – Father Mike
- *Three's Company* (1977) – Lloyd Cross
- *Charlie's Angels* (1978) – one episode, Angels in Vegas - Marty Cole
- *Hardcore* (1979) – Wes DeJong
- *Parts: The Clonus Horror* (1979) – Dr. Jameson
- ''Family Ties'' (1982) one episode, No Nukes Is Good Nukes - Elyse's dad
- *I'm Going to Be Famous* (1983) – The Director
- *Benson* (1984) season 6 episode 4 "the campaign" as Worth Lakewood
- *The Eleventh Commandment* (1986) – Charles Knight
- *Teen Witch* (1989) – Frank Miller
- *Rock-A-Die Baby* (1989) – Dad (Adam)
- *Twenty Dollar Star* (1990) – Mr. Brandon
- *Murder by Numbers* (1990) – Patrick Crain
- *Frame Up* (1991) – Will Curran
- *Acting on Impulse* (1993) – Mr. Randolph (final film role)

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from the original on December 12, 2021. Retrieved November 1, 2020.
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External links

Biography portal

- Dick Sargent (https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0765102/) at IMDb
- Dick Sargent (https://web.archive.org/web/*/https://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/person/170097%7C*) at the TCM Movie Database
- Dick Sargent (https://www.allmovie.com/artist/p220793) at AllMovie

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